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**DIVERGENCE AND CONVERGENCE BETWEEN CHINA INDIA
RELATIONS IN POST-COLD WAR ERA**

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Abstract

There is a commonly used phrase in international relations quoted from Suzy Kassam that "Today's enemies can be your friends tomorrow and today's friends can be tomorrow's enemies". India China relations are commonly reflected in these words. The two countries have experienced that situation at different stages of their relations. Since their independence conflict and co-operation is witnessed hand-in-hand. The objective of this study is understanding the areas of conflict and co-operation among these two giant neighbors. This study used qualitative research method, using extensive literature review to examine their relationship and future trends. The findings of the study suggest that although there are various issues between two countries but their co-operation as emerging, rising, and giant Asian economies will benefit both nations. However, being nuclear states, they need to refrain from conflict and resolve outstanding issues through diplomacy.

Introduction and historical Background:

The William Clay said that the politics is quite a game where, “there are no permanent friends nor permanent enemies, only permanent national interest”. These words reflect the 70 plus years relationship between India and China. The two countries have traversed many paths starting from very intense bonhomie manifested in Hindus and Chinese are brothers (Hindi - Chine Bhai Bhai) slogan, to bitter rivalry in the aftermath of 1962 war. The two Asian giants account for 35 per cent of total world population and 15 per cent of total geographical area of the world. For more than two thousand years, they had cultural, commercial, and ideological links. In the present scenario China and India are seen as the emerging Asian powers and major actors in global politics. Apart from that west see India as a regional counterweight to China.

During the early stages, China and India had been identified as Trans-Himalayan twins. Both the countries are the world’s oldest civilization with the history of close contact. In the ancient period, China and India were known as centers of spiritual and religious activity. It is believed that Buddhism was transferred from China in 1st century CE to India. Silk Road was major trading route that facilitated both India-China to spread Buddhism in East Asia (Asthana, 1999).

During British rule, there was limited trade between India-China. Though both states had very sympathetic, admirable, and respectful attitude towards each other. After a great resurgence in Asia, amid Japanese invasion of China in 1941, India sent its medical mission to China under the leadership of Dr. Kotnis, who was assassinated while performing his duty. He is remembered for his services and considered as symbol of solidarity in both countries (Hongyu, 1995).

After the independence of India in 1947, India was the first Non-Communist country to establish diplomatic relations with Peoples Republic of China (PRC) in October 1949. During the post war era, when India joined non-aligned movement, Mao opposed their policy and with these words “third way doesn’t exist either be with imperialists or socialists”. However, Nehru regarded Indian independence and Chinese revolution alike in reviving Asian nationalism. Indo-China relations deteriorated in the wake of Chinese invasion of Tibet on 7th October 1950. India stressed on peaceful solution of Tibet issue, but China dismissed Indian interference (Malik, 1995).

Then the thaw came in relations when Prime Ministers of both states visited between 1954 to 1957 and revived friendly relations. Marked by frequent visits and exchanges, China backed India’s stance on Goa, while India supported PRC membership in United Nations. The two countries jointly expounded the Panchsheel (Five Principles) in 1954 to strengthen peaceful cooperation and coexistence such as; Non-aggression, Mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and autonomy, and Non-interference in each other’s internal affairs, equality and joint benefits (Sen, 2003).

However, Indo-China relations deteriorated throughout 1960s-1970s due to China-Pakistan proximity. In 1962, Sino-Indian war led to a serious set-back in bilateral relations. Furthermore, Chinese assistance to Pakistan against India in 1965 and 1971 war created resentment in China-India relations.

Both the countries successfully restored bilateral ambassadorial relations in 1976 and the higher political level contacts were revived by the foreign minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee visit to China in 1979. Later with the visit of Indian Prime Minister Rajeev Gandhi to China in 1988, both countries agreed to develop and expand bilateral relations in all fields. Beside that both states agreed to establish Joint Working Group (JWG) to seek out fair and reasonable solution of boundary dispute. Trade resumed in 1992 after a pause of more than 30 years. Following year both states reopened their consulates in Bombay and Shanghai. During 1998 nuclear test, Indo-China relations went to lowest ebb due to statement of Indian defense minister George Fernandez declaring China as India’s opponent number one” (Pokharna, 2009).

Dr Sun Shihai from the institute of Asia Pacific Studies, Chinese Academy of Social sciences described that “the relationship between the two giant neighbors cannot be simply described as competitive or cooperative. They remain cooperative on the issues of common interests, while they treated each other as competitors on the issue of divergent interests(Harding, 2004).

In Post-Cold War era the phase of good relations started in 2003. Both leaders Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, and Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao signed declaration of cooperation and nine protocols, both leaders pledge to work for the regional stability and peace. A significant change occurred in 2003 when India withdrew its recognition of Tibet as part of Chinese territory and assured that it will no longer support separatist activities by Tibetan exiles in India. During 2004 change of government in India proved to be productive in China- India relations. Onwards the leaders of both countries met numerous times. China-India trade grow many-fold. Man Mohan Singh said: we never imagined that China would emerged as second largest trading partner(Gupta, 2009).

Chinese President Hu Jintao’s visit to India in 2006 manifested signing of 13 agreements to increase more cooperation. A joint statement was released with strong anticipation on establishing a strategic relationship and joint approach to regional and global issues(Kondapalli & Mifune, 2010)

Conflict And Commonalities of Interest Between Two Countries:

In recent years there are facets of event that took place between India and China that damaged the relations between the two states such as the problem regarding the Dalai Lama’s visit to New Delhi and China’s unfavorable attitude to declare chief of Jaish-e- Muhammad as international terrorist. India felt threatened by Chinese opposition to India’s permanent membership in United Nations Security Council, China’s construction of road in the disputed territory with Bhutan. Beside that India has apprehension regarding China Pakistan Economic Corridor CEPEC and Chinese one Belt and Road Initiatives BRI, and China’s encirclement of Indian Ocean(Li, 2009) See Table 1 for list of divergences and convergences between China and India.

TABLE. 1:Convergence and Divergence Between India-China From (1991-2018)

Name of Pair	Areas of Convergence	Areas of Divergence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade and Commerce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India’s Tibet policy

<p>India and China</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic ties • Climate change • Piracy/terrorism <p>Regional forums</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demarcation of boundary line • Sino-Pakistan military and strategic ties • Belt and Road Initiatives by China • China’s stance over India’s membership in NSG/UN security council
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Source: John W. Garver, “The China-India-U.S. triangles: Strategic Relations in Post-Cold War era”

Divergences Between India-China

- Firstly, rise of China and military modernization is perpetual strategic threat to Indian hegemony. Comparatively Beijing possesses larger military than India; However, India has advantage of terrains alongside of Sino-Indian boundary and possessing more advance communication and infrastructure proximity to the Tibet. While comparing military equipment, it is quite stark China possesses 653 modern fighting aircrafts and India possesses 349. China has 79 army advance vessels and India has 28. Likewise, China possesses 53 Submarines while India has only 14. On other hand, China has established its own fighter jets aircraft carrier with advance technologies(White, 2013).
- Secondly, both the states have territorial conflicts which caused war of 1962 and many skirmishes at their borders. In recent history, both the countries called off military conflict on unmarked border in Doklam known as Donglang which might have become a nuclear flash point between them. So, war cannot be predicted in near future between India and China; indeed, China’s military modernization and its buildup of coercive attitude in the South China Sea posed a real threat to India. Furthermore, China’s naval presence in the Indian Ocean is also one of the emerging threats to India(Qi, 2006).
- Thirdly, Beijing’s increasing influence in the international institutions like UN Security Council, NSG is appears to have great impediment in the way of New Delhi. In recent times, Beijing vetoed India’s membership into the nuclear supplier group in 2016. More the power of China increases, more it will counter India in every aspect. Keeping in view the above scenario, Beijing besides increasing its power, it is also establishing new international institutions such as Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) multilateral institutions to secure its interests of Shanghai Cooperation Organization(Lanteigne, 2005).
- Fourthly, another serious challenge to Indian hegemony is the Beijing’s role of external balancer against India in the South Asian region. China has enhanced Pakistan’s strategic capacity by helping to establish the nuclear program and missile

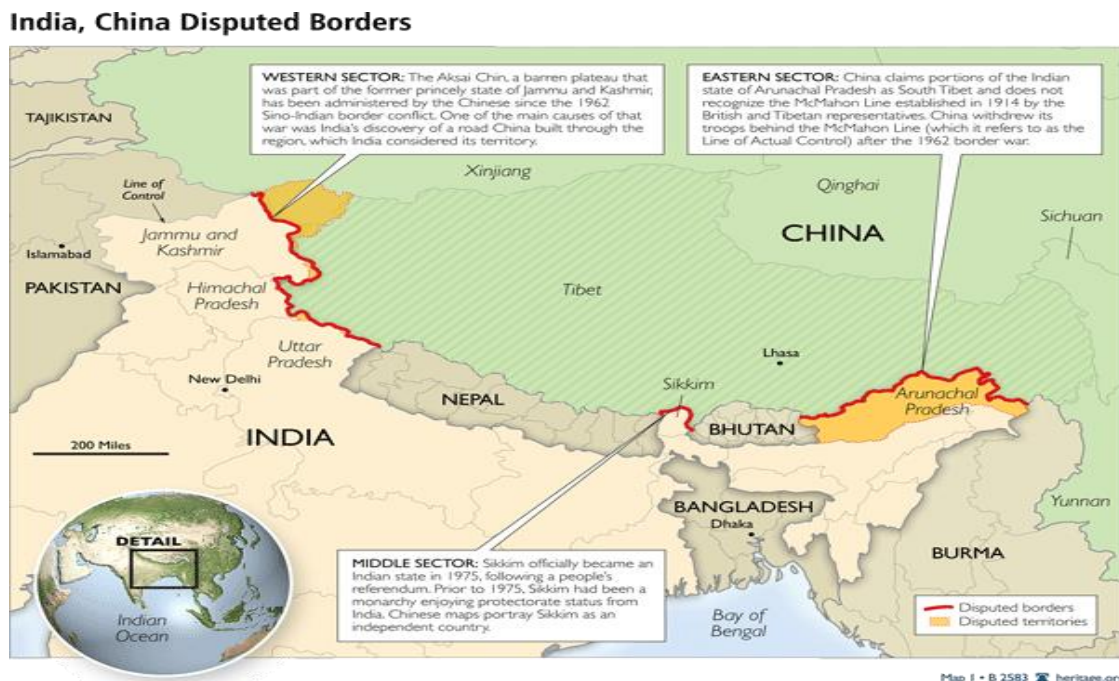
technology. The strategy of China is to engulf India on the two fronts. The most worrying factor in this regard is Pak China Economic Corridor. China including Pakistan making amicable relations with the other states who are neighbors of India like Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka as counterweight to India in the region.

- Finally, Beijing's growing economic ascendancy in the World detrimental to Indian interests. China has used the trade as a weapon by providing aid to the smaller states for securing its interests. The trade and aid were used to counter India with the support of the smaller states. China used its economic influence by Banning trade relations with Norway and South Korea who posed threat to Beijing's interests. China used foreign aid to enhance its foreign policy objectives(Zhu, 2011).

Border Disputes

India is second largest neighbor sharing 2000 km of land border with China. Both states have clashed over land area of Eastern, Middle and Western zones as displayed in (Figure-1). Consequently, this caused in a short but fiercely fought war in 1962, and border skirmishes in 1967, 1987 on disputed areas of Arunachal Pradesh, Aksai Chin, Sikkim, and Shaksgam(Neville Maxwell, 2003).

Figure 1: Current and Claimed Borders of Both China and India



Source: The Economist 2012

Arunachal Pradesh

It is one of the states of India, occupied 90,000 km of area and over a million population. It is bordered by Tibet autonomous region of China to the north. During British rule Henry McMahon at the Shimla convention of 1914 demarcated boundary line between Tibetan

region of China and north-east region of India. McMahon line is considered as legal border line by India, However China never regarded this boundary as legal and rejected McMahon and Simla convention of 1914 challenging that Tibet was not a sovereign state so cannot conclude a treaty. Chinese maps display some 150,000 km as part of autonomous Tibet popularly known as South Tibet. India during 1950s tried to sort this issue out through all parties' recognition for validating the Mac Mohan line however, during the 1962 war China intruded in the Arunachal Pradesh as its part by military intervention(I. Singh, 2006).

Aksai Chin

This region is one of the important border disputes between China and India. British was responsible to inflict the issue because during the independence of the newly born state, it had drawn an unjustified border distribution among the states. India considers the Johnson line in which the Aksai region was part of India and China considered the post-colonial formula of McCartney-Macdonald line in which Aksai was part of China. In the late fifties the Aksai was part of India and New Delhi came to know that China was infiltrating in the region. China was establishing roads from Tibet to the Xinjiang region.

The aggregate result of these tensions between the two states into the Sino- India war of 1962. Aksai is controlled by China and claimed by India as its part. The highway build by the China in the region is strategically very crucial because it connects North-South transport and the military logistics to the Xinjiang and Tibet(Guruswamy, 2006).

Sikkim

The Nathu La and Cho La incident were series of armed skirmishes in 1967 between China and India. At first the territory of Sikkim was part of India later on China occupied this part and in 1975 through referendum it was again given to India. However, China did not accept the referendum. After some time in 2003, it was decided by India and China that Sikkim was given to India. In 2005 Chinese President Wen Jiabao, declared that Sikkim is no longer a dispute between India-China(Jetly, 2006).

Sino-Indian War of 1962

In 1962 China's People's liberation Army invaded Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh across the Mc Mohan Line. The Indian force at that time was not prepared to compete with Chinese army (Neville Maxwell, 1999). It was shocking for India and especially for Nehru. U.S adopted neutral posture in the eve of Sino-India conflict. Soviet Union due to its tilt towards India offered military assistance to New Delhi. India on the other hand, requested for military and political aid against China. However, both the superpowers remained reluctant towards the Sino-India conflict. This event brought about pragmatic shift from idealist state to rational one." (Hoffmann, 2006), (Kadian, 1999).

The Sino- India war of 1967 was not famous. It was lasted from 11 September to 1 October 1967. Chinese military intruded into area of Sikkim which was independent territory at the time. China got defeat in the war; the People's Republic army adopted the tactics in the form of Indo-Pak War of 1965 to dilute Indian strength. The Sino-India war triggered bloodless conflict in the Sumdorong Chu valley in Arunachal Pradesh. The war was started when India took stand on the disputed territory of Arunachal Pradesh in 1986. India in this war, adopted

change of strategy and used advanced weapons sending message to PLA of its offence stance. However, diplomatic initiatives were adopted to solve the issue. Ultimately border agreement was signed and economic relations were enhanced between the states to de-escalate the tension.”(Baruah, 2007).

China after the death of Mao Zedong brought about pragmatic economic reforms 1978. The objective of these reforms was to extend China’s economic relations with the other states. Such way China increased its exports driven economic growth on the basis of its cheap labor; India on the other hand was close economy till the end of Cold War. However, owing to border conflict and other political issues there was limited economic reiteration between New Delhi and Beijing. In the post-Cold War era India adopted economic liberalization and relations between the two states further increased(Kak, 2006).

Threats from India to China

India’s economic growth helped New Delhi to take strategic measures, such as acquiring aircraft carrier and sophisticated weapon system aimed at dominating the South Asian and Indian Ocean region. The Indian government and state policy regarding the South Asian region is that if any dispute emerges in the South Asian region; then India must intervene in it rather than allow outside powers to intervene into the affairs. New Delhi manifested publicly in her Maritime doctrine of 2004 that India would analyze its geographic location and strategic challenges. The document states “due to its geographic location India is capable of influencing the movement and security of shipping proclivity to SLOC’S (Sea Lanes of Communications) in the Indian Ocean Region proves that India is maritime power(A. SINGH, 2020).

India is controlling the choke points for using it as bargaining chip in global power game. Beijing is apprehensive of increasing agreements between New Delhi and Washington that might have brought about seismic shift in the balance of power in the Indian Ocean Region. The Strategy of China in this regard is that it will counterweight the maritime powers and their quadrilateral alliance of America, Japan, Australia, and India. “The enduring aims of Chinese leaders is to establish strategies such as sustainable economic growth, and amelioration, keeping internal political stability, defending national interests of China and its territorial integrity and maintaining Beijing’s status as great power” (Mahmud, 2007).

Convergences Between India-China

- China and India are rising power of the Asia. Their importance increases because they possess 35% of the world population and 15% of the geographic area. China and India are crucial actors for the other regional and international powers because both are the giants of Asian economy. Due to their huge economic growth, their mutual cooperation is key stone for the growth and development of Asian economy(Kurian, 2001).
- Despite having disagreements on certain issues, both India and China are enjoying a period of stability and economic ties. The visit of Atal Bihari Vajpayee to China in June 2003 and return visit by Premier Wen Jiabao in April 2005, opened the doors of economic engagement. It is analyzed that the reason behind this engagement is rising China, which can pose threat or present opportunity to Indian foreign policy. Looking at

the economic perspectives between China and India, being big markets can facilitate each other to bring about economic prosperity and modest skills(Hoslag, 2009).

- Another area of cooperation is the environmental challenges, both India and China signed five years pact in 2009 to deal with the climate change issue. This was established under auspices of the United Nations climate change summit in Copenhagen in 2009. Both the states being members of G-20 are of the view that it is great responsibility of the developed nations to control the greenhouse gasses rather than underdeveloped states. Under the platform of Copenhagen conference, the voices were raised by the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) to oppose the proposal that underdeveloped states should reduce the emission(Hampson & Heinbecker, 2011).
- Including economy, trade, and environmental cooperation, both states agreed on the antipiracy patrol in the IOR (Indian Ocean Region) through mutual surveillance. The Indian presence in East Malacca and Chinese in the west Malacca established peaceful atmosphere. The presence of both the states established peaceful coexistence.
- The increasing trade between two states has left pragmatic implications on their political and strategic issues. The trade between them is now reached all-time high in 2018-2019 worth of \$87.07 billion(Manoj Sharma, 2019).Both states are thinking to conclude the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). This partnership would be capable of deterring trade war and nationalists' tendencies.
- In 2018 Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed on "perceptible improvement" in mutual ties and widespread regional and international problems. The Wuhan Summit of May 2018 was pragmatic in a sense that both states revived their amicable relations and warded off negative aspects between both neighbors and had mutual agreement on the convergence.
- China and India are working together to promote their mutual interests such as: both states agreed to strengthen their military cooperation to combat terrorism, coordination with each other on the issues of climate change. In December 2018, both states resumed their joint military exercises and agreed to work on the 10 pillars of cooperation.

Conclusion:

China and India are rising power of the Asia. Their importance increases because they possess 37% of the world population and 15% of the geographic area. China and India are crucial actors for the other regional and international powers because both are the giants of Asian economy.

The relations between two states went through the different phases, during the phase one from 1949 to 1959, despite of different political system China-India respected each other as an Asian fellow. During the second phase Sino-Indian conflict of 1962, led to a serious set-back in bilateral relations. Phase three brought new spirit in India-China relations. The phase of good relations started in 2003. During 2004 change of government in India proved to be productive in China- India relations. Onwards the leaders of both countries met numerous times. China-India trade grow many-fold. Manmohan Singh said: we never imagined that China would emerge as second largest trading partner.

Despite of growing economic relations, number of divergent issues negatively effects the two Asian powers. Such as Strategic relations between India and America, Indo-US nuclear deal,

and India's look East policy. Conversely there are facets of issues that created the concerns for India such as: Chinese opposition to India's permanent membership in United Nations Security Council. Chinese one Belt and Road Initiatives BRI, and its relations with Islamabad interims of strategic cooperation through establishing Gwadar Port appears as economic and strategic threats to India. China's encirclement of Indian Ocean. The increasing cooperation with the various states located near Indian Ocean and China's engagement with the smaller neighboring states of India created serious concerns.

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